

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

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O 220910Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2622

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L TRIPOLI 1193

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ENRG, CASC

SUBJECT: OXY-LARG DISPUTE

REF: TRIPOLI 1186

1. MFA DEPUTY UNDERSECRETARY TURAKYI ASKED CHARGE TO SEE HIM, AS HE HAD BRITISH AMBASSADOR TWO HOURS EARLIER ON OCT 21. HE NOTED WITHOUT COMMENT THAT USG HAD NOT YET PREVAILED ON OCCIDENTAL OIL CO TO PAY LARG THE MONEY OWED TO IT AND THAT ROTATION OF OXY PERSONNEL IN AND OUT OF LIBYA ON MAN FOR MAN BASIS WAS WORKING ALL RIGHT. REASON HE CALLED CHARGE, HOWEVER, WAS TO INFORM USG THAT COMPANY WAS TRYING TO INVOLVE BRITISH GOVT IN DISPUTE WITH LARG ON TRAVEL ISSUE.

2. HE HAD IN HIS HAND A SHEAF OF INTERCEPTED TELEGRAMS FROM OXY LONDON TO TRIPOLI OFFICE. AS HE READ AT RANDOM THE GIST SEEMED TO BE URGENT, IF NOT FRANTIC INSTRUCTIONS (RESPONDING TO TOUGH ORDERS FROM OXY'S HEAD OFFICE IN LOS ANGELES) TO GET BRITISH CITIZEN EMPLOYEES TO TEST TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS, AND THEN FORMALLY REQUEST PROTECTION OF BRITISH EMBASSY IF THEY COULD NOT DEPART LIBYA. TURAYKI SAID THESE ACTIONS OF COMPANY COULD CAUSE DANGEROUS SITUATION, AND LARG WANTED USG TO KNOW.

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3. CHARGE SAID IT IS GOOD THAT ROTATION PROCEDURE IS NOW

WORKING, AND WE APPRECIATED THE HELP HE AND UNDERSECRETARY DURDAH HAD GIVEN, HOWEVER, CHARGE SAID HE BELIEVED ROTATION, WHICH DID PLACE SOME LIMITATIONS ON TRAVEL, WAS NO LONGER SUFFICIENT TO KEEP PRESSURES FROM BUILDING UP AMONG EMPLOYEES AND ELSEWHERE IN US AN UK. IN INTERESTS OF ALL PARTIES, NOT LEAST OF ALL LARG, IT WAS TIME TO DO AWAY WITH ALL TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS. THERE WAS NO QUESTION IN ANYONE'S MIND ABOUT THE NEED TO SAFEGUARD THE INSTALLATIONS AND THE OIL KEPT FLOWING. CHARGE SAID HE FELT THERE WAS NO GREAT OBSTACLE TO THE COMPANY AND PETROLEUM MINISTRY BEING ABLE TO ARRANGE THIS.

4. TURAYKI WAS NOT PREPARED TO REPLY AND ONLY SAID LIBYA COULD THINK OF ABOLISHING ROTATION PROCEDURE IF "YOU" (APPARENTLY A VAGUE REFERENCE TO USG AND OXY JOINTLY) WOULD GUARANTEE AGAINST LOSSES TO LIBYA.

5. BRITISH AMBASSADOR TOLD CHARGE BRIEFLY HE HAD REPLIED TO TURAYKI THAT HMG DOES NOT INTEND TO BECOME INVOLVED IN COMPANY'S PROBLEM, BRITISH EMBASSY HAS HAD NO COMPLAINTS FROM ITS CITIZENS, BUT WOULD TAKE UP WITH MFA ANY CASES WHICH MIGHT ARISE.

6. COMPANY OFFICIALS HAVE TOLD US THEY WERE MUCH CONCERNED A FEW DAYS AGO ABOUT REPORTS FROM ZUWAYTINA TERMINAL THAT BRITISH WORKERS WERE GOINT TO TAKE SO-CALLED INDUSTRIAL ACTION. SIDELIGHT PERTINENT TO SITUATION IS THAT BRITISH EMPLOYEES HAVE NEGLIGIBLE LOYALTY TO COMPANY BECAUSE OF THE BASIC GRIEVANCE THAT THEIR PAY SCALE IS MUCH LOWER THAN THAT FOR AMERICAN EMPLOYEES.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PETROLEUM INDUSTRY, DISPUTES, TRAVEL CONTROLS, FOREIGN WORKERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 OCT 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: SmithRJ
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975TRIPOL01193
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750366-0547
From: TRIPOLI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19751031/aaaabbjq.tel
Line Count: 92
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 75 TRIPOLI 1186
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: SmithRJ
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 06 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <06 MAY 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <02 OCT 2003 by SmithRJ>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: OXY-LARG DISPUTE
TAGS: PFOR, ENRG, CASC, OCCIDENTAL PETROLEUM CORPORATION
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006